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WEST COAST WATCH: William Van Cleave, a national security expert and principal defense advisor to Ronald Reagan during last year's campaign and transition periods, tells The DAILY "something funny happened on the way to the Pentagon." After rising to national prominence late in the year, and being regarded as a leading candidate for Defense Secretary or another top spot in the new Administration, Van Cleave has returned to his job as director of the University of Southern California's program of strategic studies, which he said was "sadly neglected" during his absence. He says "no position has been offered" by the Reagan Administration although "it's entirely possible that something will still develop." He says he has no comment on appointments made so far—"we need to wait a while and see how the full team looks" at the Pentagon, State Department, NSC, CIA and elsewhere. Then, he says, as "an independent academician in the field," he will speak out.